



PATENT APPLICATION

Attorney Docket No. 1000076-0001

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Clifford J. Merlo)

Application No.: 10/696,372)

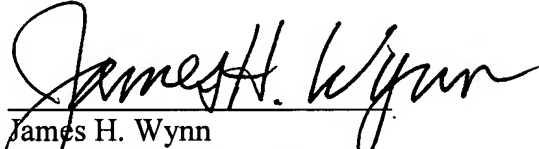
Filed: 10/28/2003)

Art Unit: 2881)

Examiner: Nikita Wells)

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James H. Wynn
Registration No. 45,545

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Hon. Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office
Attention: Commissioner for Patents
P. O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

In accordance with the duty of disclosure under 37 C.F.R. § 1.56 and as authorized under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.97 - 1.98 and the provisions of MPEP §§ 609 and 707.05(b), Applicant submits herewith certain patent documents, publications, and/or other information ("references") which the Patent and Trademark Office may wish to consider in examining the above-identified patent application. The identification of any reference herein is not intended to be and should not be understood as being an admission that such reference necessarily constitutes "prior art" within the meaning of the applicable law.

The cited references are listed on attached form PTO/SB08A. A copy of each cited reference is provided.

The examiner is requested to review and evaluate each cited reference to make an independent assessment of the materiality, if any, of each, to the examination of the above-identified application. The Examiner is requested to ignore any underscoring or highlighting which may have been done because such markings may or may not have any relationship to the subject matter of the present invention. The copies being submitted are the best copies available

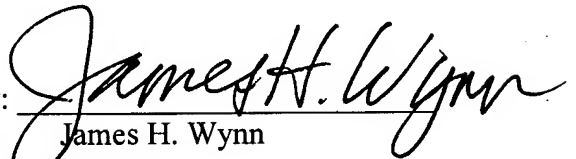
at this time. Applicant respectfully requests that (1) the references cited herein be made of record; (2) that the Examiner acknowledge her consideration of each reference by initialing next to each reference; and (3) that such references appear on the printed patent as having been considered on the record.

With regard to payment of a fee. No fee is due because this Statement is mailed within three months of the filing date of this application, or before the mailing date of the first office action on the merits (see 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(b)).

If any fees are owed, or any credit is due pertaining to this case, please charge the fee or apply that credit to Deposit Account 144122. A duplicate sheet of this page is enclosed.

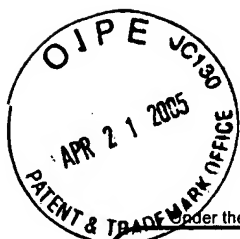
Respectfully submitted,

LORD, BISSELL & BROOK LLP

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PTO/SB/08A (08-03)

Approved for use through 07/31/2006. OMB 0651-0031

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Substitute for form 1449/PTO

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**

(Use as many sheets as necessary)

Complete if Known

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Application Number | 10,696,372 |
| Filing Date | 10/23/2003 |
| First Named Inventor | Clifford J. Merlo |
| Art Unit | 2878 |
| Examiner Name | Nikita Wells |
| Attorney Docket Number | 1000076-0001 |

Sheet 1 of 2

U. S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

| Examiner Initials* | Cite No. ¹ | Document Number | Publication Date MM-DD-YYYY | Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document | Pages, Columns, Lines, Where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|---|
| | | Number-Kind Code ² (if known) | | | |
| | | US- 2003/0128812 A1 | 07/10/2003 | Appleby et al. | |
| | | US- 2003/0123609 A1 | 07/03/2003 | Manske | |
| | | US- 6,526,123 B2 | 02/25/2003 | Ein-Gal | |
| | | US- 6,377,661 B1 | 04/23/2002 | Guru et al. | |
| | | US- 6,320,938 B1 | 11/20/2001 | Hopper | |
| | | US- 6,052,436 | 04/18/2000 | Huttner et al. | |
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| | | US- 4,798,961 | 01/17/1989 | Augustsson | |
| | | US- 4,707,846 | 11/17/1987 | Sportelli et al. | |
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| | | US- | | | |
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| | | US- | | | |

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

| Examiner Initials* | Cite No. ¹ | Foreign Patent Document | Publication Date MM-DD-YYYY | Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document | Pages, Columns, Lines, Where Relevant Passages Or Relevant Figures Appear | T ⁶ |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--|---|----------------|
| | | Country Code ³ Number ⁴ Kind Code ⁵ (if known) | | | | |
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This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 2 hours to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

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| Substitute for form 1449/PTO INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT <i>(Use as many sheets as necessary)</i> | | Complete if Known | |
| | | Application Number | 10,696,372 |
| | | Filing Date | 10/23/2003 |
| | | First Named Inventor | Clifford J. Merlo |
| | | Art Unit | 2878 |
| | | Examiner Name | Nikita Wells |
| Sheet 2 of 2 | Attorney Docket Number | 1000076-0001 | |

| NON PATENT LITERATURE DOCUMENTS | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|---|----------------|
| Examiner Initials* | Cite No. ¹ | Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc.), date, page(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, city and/or country where published. | T ² |
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